



Tuscarora Nation continues to wait on state recognition status



Tuscarora Nation fights for state recognition status

By [Patrick Lloyd](#) | April 30, 2019 at 8:12 PM EDT - Updated April 30 at 8:12 PM

RALEIGH, NC (WMBF) - The Tuscarora Nation of North Carolina has been fighting for decades to receive state recognition as a Native American tribe from North Carolina, and they're going to have to continue to wait for the foreseeable future.

The North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs Recognition Committee voted in a hearing Tuesday to delay a vote on whether to recommend state recognition to the North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs.

The hearing featured several members of the Tuscarora Nation who testified about the history of the tribe in an attempt to establish enough proof the tribe deserves state recognition.

Even though the recognition committee didn't vote, they appeared to show signs of indicating that they won't vote to recommend recognition.

Anita Finger-Smith is the genealogist for state recognition for the commission. She said the Tuscarora Nation doesn't meet one of the main criterion to qualify for state recognition. She said they can't trace their lineage back to 1790. But members of the Tuscarora Nation said that's not true.

"It's emotional," Tamra Lowry of the Tuscarora Nation of North Carolina said. "It's emotional, but we have to stand our ground."

The Tuscarora Nation started its fight to receive recognition back in the late 1970s. Their efforts have failed every time.

State recognition means the Tuscarora Nation would have access to apply for federal and state money that could go toward education or housing.

"This is another tactic of the state commission, the North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs," Lowry said. "Multiple times, they have said, 'Okay, we're going to make a decision or we're going to make a recommendation.' We get there, and we're under the assumption that a recommendation is going to be rendered or a decision is going to be made, and it's delayed... again."

No word on when the recognition committee will make their decision.

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AUTHOR

Patrick Lloyd

Video journalist



Patrick Lloyd is a Reporter/Multimedia Journalist at WMBF News. He started in May 2017.

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